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DE RUEHSO #1277 3531211
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FM AMCONSUL SAO PAULO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6180
INFO RHEHNSC/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY 7270
RUEHRI/AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO PRIORITY 7664
RUCPDOG/USDOC WASHDC 2658

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STATE INR/R/MR; IIP/R/MR; WHA/PD

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TAGS: [KMDR](#) [OPRC](#) [OIIP](#) [ETRD](#) [BR](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: MIDEAST: PALESTINIAN GOVERNANCE; SAO PAULO

11. "Palestinian Crossroad"

Liberal, largest national circulation daily Folha de S. Paulo (12/9) editorialized: "The Palestinians are on the eve of a civil war, and PNA President Mahmoud Abbas' decision of calling elections does not help to calm the situation. However, the call for elections has at least the merit of breaking an impasse. A possibility is that in view of the threat of getting themselves involved in a fratricidal confrontation or losing power through the voting process, Fatah and Hamas will reach an understanding and finally succeed in creating a coalition government.... Most of the responsibility for the current crisis is of Hamas and its obsessive insistence on denying recognition to Israel's right to existence.... Developments in recent months have placed the Palestinians in the worst world. If they succeed in preventing a civil war and deciding their future through the ballot, they will have to choose between Hamas and Fatah, whose inefficiency and corruption had already led the population to prefer Hamas."

12. "In The Middle East, What Was Bad Has Become Much Worse"

An editorial in business-oriented Valor Economico (12/19) remarked: "The year is ending and any hope of peace in the Middle East was buried. This year was especially bloody and destabilizing in the region. The final chapter - sad as the previous ones - is being written with the beginning of a civil war between Palestinian rival factions Hamas and Fatah.... Since the political chess is terribly complex in the region, [PNA President Mahmoud] Abbas risked provoking an internal war among Palestinians when he tried to pave the way for an uncertain dialogue with Israel.... The ballot option, which would be supported by the Palestinian population, is the least bloody and the one with most chances of fostering a truce among the rival factions. The climate, however, does not favor the peace process. A civil war is currently bloodying Iraq, Hezbollah's Shiites rally on streets the overcome of Lebanon's government, which may bring the civil war back, and the Iranian government, which supports the Lebanese Shiite group, has launched open challenges against the US and Israel. The Arabs deserve a better fate, but unfortunately it is not on the horizon."

Wolfe